

VIEUX CARRE COMMISSION

Mitchell J. Landrieu
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Lary P. Hesdorffer
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Minutes of the **Vieux Carré Commission** meeting of **Wednesday, July, 1 2015.**

- COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Nicholas S. Musso, Chairman
Daniel C. Taylor, Vice-Chairman
Leslie S. Stokes, Secretary
C.J. Blanda
Jorge A. Henriquez
Michael A. Skinner
- COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Patricia C. Denechaud
- STAFF PRESENT:** Lary P. Hesdorffer, Director; Renee' Bourgogne, Architectural Historian, Nicholas G. Albrecht, Building Plans Examiner; Erin Vogt, Building Plans Examiner; Erika Gates, Inspector; Melissa Quigley, Assistant City Attorney; Allison Church, Intern
- OTHERS PRESENT:** Richard Albert, Carl Causey, Toni Causey, Elizabeth Edwards, Daniel Hammer, L. Katherine Harmon, Priscilla Lawrence, Meg Lousteau, Patricia Meadowcroft, Robert Pell, Wayne Ruth, Jamie Saxon, Hank Smith, David Waggoner, John Williams, Lacey Wotring

AGENDA

I. ROLL CALL

Chairman Musso called the meeting to order at 1:45 PM. Mr. Hesdorffer called the roll, noting the presence of a quorum with five (5) of the seven (7) seated Commissioners in attendance. (Mr. Henriquez had not yet arrived) Mr. Hesdorffer noted that with five (5) members present, four (4) affirmative votes are needed to pass any action.

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

With the noted addition of Mr. Andrew Scott's name among attendees, Mr. Blanda moved to accept the minutes of the June 3, 2015 Vieux Carre Commission meeting as presented. Mr. Taylor seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Due to time constraints and in consideration of the scheduled officers' elections, the Chairman waived his report and deferred to the Director.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Hesdorffer introduced Ms. Renee Bourgogne as the new Architectural Historian and addition to the VCC staff. He presented her background and asked her to stand and greet the Commission.

V. FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS – Annual Election of Officers

Before entertaining nominations for officers, Mr. Musso appointed Mr. Taylor to continue as the Chairman of the Architectural Committee. Mr. Taylor agreed. Mr. Musso then asked for nominations for Vieux Carre Commission Chair. Mr. Taylor moved to nominate Mr. Musso and Mrs. Stokes seconded. With the call for the vote, Mr. Musso was re-elected unanimously to serve as Chairman. Mr. Taylor then moved to nominate Mrs. Stokes to continue as Vieux Carre Commission Secretary. Mr. Blanda seconded the motion passed and Mrs. Stokes was unanimously re-elected to serve as Secretary. Finally, Mr. Musso nominated Mr. Taylor to continue to serve as Vieux Carre Commission Vice-Chairman. Mr. Skinner seconded, and Mr. Taylor was re-elected unanimously to serve as Vice-Chairman.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

515 Toulouse St, 517 Toulouse St, 531 Toulouse St, 516 Wilkinson St, 520 Wilkinson St: Harry Baker Smith Architects, applicant; 515 Toulouse LLC, owner; Proposal to renovate buildings, including demolition of courtyard infill, in conjunction with **change of use** from *vacant* to *residential/commercial*, per application & revised drawings received 03/10/15 & 06/02/15,

respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff report with Mr. Smith present on behalf of the application. Mr. Causey asked for clarification about the action taken at the May 6, 2015 Commission meeting. Mr. Hesdorffer clarified that the last motion of the Commission returned the application to the Architectural Committee. Mr. Causey stated he had no objection extending the addition to the height of the existing sawtooth skylights but no higher than that existing element. Mrs. Causey stated she does not believe the existing skylights are at a height of 52'2" and suggested an independent survey be conducted to confirm the height.

[Mr. Henriquez entered during the discussion.]

Ms. Lousteau, speaking on behalf of VCPORA, requested that the 50' height limit outlined in the CZO be respected and that any development fit within the rules.

Mr. Skinner asked if a legal survey had been conducted to confirm the height of the existing skylights. Mr. Smith explained that his staff had measured the height with a laser instrument. Mr. Musso asked if they would be willing to get an independent survey. Mr. Smith stated that would be fine.

Mr. Blanda suggested the application be deferred until the height can be confirmed and that he would be satisfied if the height was maintained.

Mr. Skinner moved to **defer** the application to confirm the height of the existing sawtooth skylights and then to return the application to the Commission. Mr. Blanda seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

309 Chartres St: Robert Pell, applicant; SA Mintz, LLC, owner; Review of final design proposal to renovate building, including construction of penthouse, in conjunction with a **change of use** from *commercial/vacant* to *commercial/residential*, per application & materials received 03/24/15 & 06/16/15, respectively.

Ms. Vogt gave the staff report with Mr. Pell representing the application. Mr. Musso expressed interest in the existence of bedrooms with no natural light and noted his concern that this will lead to short term rentals. Mr. Skinner asked if the proposed materials were accurate on the rendering. Mr. Pell stated that the materials would be modern on a contemporary addition and the structure was not intended to falsify its age. Mr. Musso stated that the guidelines encourage contemporary materials on new buildings. Mr. Skinner asked if the structure was visible from the street. Mr. Musso answered that it could not be seen from the street. Mr. Pell clarified that the addition is set back 70 feet from the Chartres elevation and further, that he expected the Board of Zoning Adjustments to grant its approval on July 14, 2015. Mr. Taylor stated that staff had approved the proposal and moved for **approval** of the proposal as submitted. Mr. Skinner seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

520 Royal St, 525-33 Chartres St, 616 Toulouse St: Waggoner & Ball Architects, applicant; Kemper & Leila Williams Foundation, owner; Proposal to renovate buildings, including re-subdivision, partial rerating, demolition, and new construction in conjunction with a **change of use** from *vacant* to *museum*, per application & materials submitted 05/11/15, 06/16/15, & 06/25/15, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff report with Mr. Waggoner and Ms. Lawrence present on behalf of the application. Mr. Hesdorffer stated they were considering the re-subdivision and the erroneous blue-rating of the back building. Mr. Musso stated he would like to consider the proposal in three parts: the conceptual design, the re-rating of the back building, and the re-subdivision.

Mr. Waggoner then gave a presentation summarizing the long term plans for the property.

Mr. Musso stated the Commission is taking this application very seriously based particularly on the importance of the highly-rated structures on the property. Mr. Skinner asked about the visibility of the new construction from street levels. Mr. Waggoner stated that it may be slightly visible from surrounding streets.

Mr. Taylor moved for **conceptual approval** including the re-rating of the rear building, the start of the 30-day layover period, and a recommendation of approval for the proposed re-

subdivision. Mr. Blanda seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

1113 Decatur St: Harry Baker Smith Architects, applicant; 1113 Decatur LLC, owner; Proposal to install new skylight on rear roof slope, per application & materials received 06/03/15.

Ms. Vogt gave the staff report with Mr. Smith representing the application. Without need for lengthy discussion, Mr. Taylor moved to **approve** the application to install a skylight as proposed. Ms. Stokes seconded; and the motion carried.

508 Bourbon St: Loretta Harmon, applicant; Anglade 500 Properties LLC, owner; Proposal to alter and replace first floor openings, awning, and lighting, per application & materials received 06/09/15.

Ms. Vogt presented the staff report with Ms. Harmon in attendance on behalf of the application. Staff recommended approval of the drawings received 06/30/15, which had included true divided-lite glass in sidelights, use of wood in lieu of hardie board, and the installation of a retractable awning instead of a fixed awning. These recommendations had been originally suggested in the Architectural Committee meeting of 06/23/15. However, staff noted that more information is necessary before permitting the St. Louis side landings proposed for courtyard access.

Mr. Taylor moved to **approve** the staff recommendations, allowing a permit to be issued for the Bourbon façade changes but requiring additional detailed information for the courtyard openings. Mr. Skinner seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

210 Decatur St: Kay Champagne, applicant; Noah Grace LLC, owner; Conceptual proposal to renovate building in conjunction with **change of use** from *vacant* to *commercial/residential*, per application & revised materials received 04/14/15 & 06/16/15, respectively.

Ms. Vogt gave the staff presentation with Mr. Williams representing the application. Mr. Musso commented that the lack of windows in bedrooms increases the risk of units becoming short term rentals rather than long term residential units. Mr. Blanda questioned the size of the units, asking if each unit was larger than 340 sq. ft. Mr. Hesdorffer clarified that Sect. 8.10.1 of the CZO provides for a reduced lot area per dwelling unit ratio of 340 sq. ft. when the size of each residential unit is 800 sq. ft. or greater. Mr. Williams stated that the smallest unit is 800 sq. ft. (meeting the requirement for 8.10.1) while larger units are over 1,000 sq. ft.

Mr. Taylor expressed concern over the treatment of the Clinton Street elevation, but moved to grant **conceptual approval**. Mr. Musso asked how many bedrooms will be without some form of daylight. Mr. Williams replied that six bedrooms will be completely without daylight, but several will have internal transoms that allow for natural light to be borrowed from other spaces. Mr. Blanda seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

VIII. APPEALS AND VIOLATIONS

910 Royal St: Lacey Wotring, applicant; Princess of Monaco, LLC, Royal Alice Properties, LLC, Johnson N II Barrett, Princess of Monaco LLC, Katherine K Fugate, Johnson N II Barrett, owner; Appeal of Architectural Committee denial of proposal to install new elevator at rear service wing, per application & drawings received 02/03/15 & 06/29/15, respectively.

Ms. Vogt gave the staff presentation with Mr. Williams and Ms. Wotring representing the application. Mr. Blanda expressed that, out of all the proposals, he preferred Concept A, with the trellis. Mr. Musso stated that all the concepts had been previously denied by the Architectural Committee, but that the Commission has the option to override the Committee's action. Mr. Blanda stated his own concern, not wishing to overrule the Committee's action. Mr. Skinner commented that the Commission could send the application back to the Architectural Committee for further review. The Chairman noted that too was an option, adding that the Committee had already seen and denied each of the proposed concepts. Mr. Skinner moved to **defer** the application and to refer the proposal to the Architectural Committee for further consideration. Mr. Blanda seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

417 Burgundy St: Dixon Jelich, applicant; Thomas B Edwards, owner; Appeal of Architecture Committee denial of proposal to make various structural repairs, including the installation of a total of four tie rods and various helical ties, per application & materials received 04/15/15.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff report with Messrs. Albert, Saxon, and Ruth present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso said he was more familiar with the product and that he does not like going against recommendations of structural engineers. Mr. Musso stated he would like to see

the proposal referred back to the Architectural Committee due the technical nature of the application; and further, he would like to know the National Park Service's position on the use of the product and methodology.

The applicant stated this technique would allow the historic material to be kept in place. Elizabeth Edwards, the owner of the property, said they wanted to restore the rear building to its original condition.

Mr. Musso stated that this is a highly technical issue that he would prefer to be studied at the Architectural Committee rather than at the Commission level.

Mr. Blanda moved to **defer** the application, sending it back to the Architectural Committee for consideration. Mr. Skinner seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

IX. RATIFICATION of Architectural Committee and Staff actions since the Wednesday, June 03, 2015 VCC meeting.

Mr. Taylor moved, Ms. Stokes seconded, to ratify the actions taken by the Architectural Committee and Staff since the Vieux Carré Commission meeting of June 3, 2015. The motion passed unanimously.

With no further business to be considered, Mr. Taylor moved that for adjournment. The motion, seconded by Ms. Stokes, passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:07 PM.

APPROVED: _____
Leslie Stokes, Secretary

NOTE: These minutes are a summary of actions taken and are not a verbatim transcription of the meeting.